# SOME COMPARATIVE TRAITS OF THE MASKOGIAN LANGUAGES

## By FRANK G. SPECK

In their former range the languages constituting the Maskogian linguistic stock were spoken by the Indians occupying, in general terms, the region situated between the Mississippi river, below the junction of the Ohio, and the Atlantic ocean southward to the Gulf of Mexico. At the present time the Maskogian speaking tribes are represented by the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole, and reside in Indian Territory. Into all of these tribes, which number collectively about 50,000 souls, have been incorporated from time to time various other tribes in more or less close linguistic and ethnological relationship with them. So, in the present-day Choctaw and Chickasaw have somewhere been merged the Huma, the Yazoo tribes, the Acolapissa, and probably many others who are now known only historically by names which appear in old records. Just what the affiliations of these tribes were and where they belong in a critical classification it is difficult to say. Farther east the same conditions held, but here we find the group distinctions a little better preserved in some of the confederated towns which make up the body of the Creek Nation. These were chiefly Hitchiti, Apalachi, Koassati, Alibamu, and perhaps others not yet clearly determined, whose dialects differed variously from the normal tongue spoken in the majority of the Creek towns. They generally resided, before the removal westward, among the Lower Creeks, nearer the gulf, and between the Choctaw and the Upper or Northern Creeks. This gave them a somewhat intermediate geographical position between the larger Choctaw-Chickasaw, or western group, and the Creek or Maskogi proper, in the east.

As regards the Natchez, whose possible linguistic affinity to Maskogian has been recently suggested,[1] no attempt has been

---

[1] See the article by Dr John R. Swanton in this number. — EDITOR.

made, for the purposes of this article, to investigate the reasons
leading to such a conclusion.  .Accordingly Powell's old classifica-
tion of this tribe as forming a separate stock has been adhered to
for the present at least.   Until more is known of the smaller dia-
lects of Maskogian, however, the time is  hardly ripe for pronoun-
cing judgment on their exact relations to the larger and better de-
fined groups eastward and westward.   At any rate, for the time
being the grounds for Gatschet's division of the whole Maskogian
stock into four main groups :  (1) Choctaw-Chickasaw, (2) Alibamu-
Koassati, (3) Hitchiti-Apalachi-Mikasuki, (4) Creek-Seminole —
seem to be well taken if we accept his classification on the basis of
the lexicographic material which unfortunately is about all that is
available for purposes of comparison.

The material presented here has been taken in part from Gat-
schet's account of Creek and Hitchiti,[1] which he procured from In-
dians in the general region of Eufaula town, Creek Nation, and
from Byington's *Choctaw Grammar*.[2]   The latter contains much
material, but it is not critically treated and is poorly systematized
from an inductive point of view.   Gatschet on his part does not
pretend to be· complete in his linguistic sketches of Maskogian.
The rest of the matter is the result of personal inquiries attendant
upon the collection of some texts from the Creeks of Taskigi and
Lutcapoga towns, and the Chickasaw of Indian Territory.   The
investigations were made only incidentally while the author was
engaged with the Yuchi Indians, and the prospects now are that it
will be some time before the Maskogian material can be finally
digested and presented in detail.

Before attempting to deal with some of the more specific gram-
matical traits common to these languages as members of one stock,
it may be well to say for very general comparative purposes that
Maskogian, in its broadest general classification, may be character-
ized as pronominally incorporating and verbally inflectional.   As
for polysynthesis, which has been supposed by some philologists to
be an inseparable property of American languages, it can hardly be
said to be an important characterizing feature here.   In this respect

---

[1] *Migration Legend of the Creek Indians*, vol. i, Phila., 1884 ; vol. ii, St· Louis,
1888.
[2] Phila., 1870.

Maskogian offers quite a contrast to the neighboring Iroquois and Algonquian which may come out more clearly later on.

Considering Maskogian again from the broadest comparative view-point of American languages, it appears to be acoustically euphonious and well-balanced as regards the frequency and combination of vowels and consonants. It seems to have neither the consonantic harshness in quality of the North Pacific coast languages nor the extreme nasalized or vocalic qualities of Iroquois or Yuchi.

The phonetic range itself, however, is characterized by some peculiarities when compared with that of Iroquois, Sioux, and Algonquian. Maskogian differs from these types in having the palatal *ł* which is characteristic of the languages spoken along parts of the Pacific coast, and a dental-labial *f* not at all common on this continent. Yuchi, however, shares both of these sounds with Maskogian. This makes of nearly the whole Southeastern region a phonetic unit, with the exception, so far as is known, of Catawba and Cherokee, which latter has only an approach to the palatal *ł* in some of its dialects.

Internally the Maskogian languages present considerable phonetic unity, having collectively the glottal catch (ᵋ); the velar stops *q* and *g*, in Creek; the palatals *tc* and *dj*, *dc*, pronounced in Creek with the tip of the tongue pressed against the palate, giving thus an intermediate sound between our *dj* and *dz*; also *k* and *g* as in English; the indeterminate surd or sonant *t* and *d* often influenced by surrounding vowels; the labials *p*, *b*; spirants *s*, *ts*, and *c* pronounced like English *sh*; and the semivowels *y*, *w*, *h*. The above-mentioned palatal *ł*, with corresponding sonant somewhat like our *dl* in Chickasaw, as well as doubled consonants are common property of all the Maskogian branches. It seems, in the nature of an exception to the above list of common sounds, that the western languages, Chickasaw and Choctaw, are weak in the sonant series, having only *b* among the stops. In addition to this, many cognates have *tc* and *k* corresponding to *dj* and *g* in Creek, but no *v* or *z* occurs in a similar relation to *f* and *s*. Another internal comparison can be made with the spirant *h*, which in some of the Creek dialects is merely breathed, and in others, noticeably in Hitchiti, is

strengthened to the velar spirant *x*. A dialectic peculiarity of Chickasaw is to weaken *n*, in the pronoun, to a nasalization of the preceding vowel before *y*.

The long vowels throughout are *ō, ū, ā, ē, ī*, while *o, u, a, e, i* occur short. In the Creek dialects are also found the open obscure *a*, like *u* in English *but*, and long open *ä* like *a* in our word *fare*, without, of course, the *r* tinge. The long vowels in both the eastern and western languages appear nasalized. The diphthongs are *ai* and *au*.

In all the Maskogian languages clusters of more than two consonants are extremely rare, if they occur at all; nor are vowel clusters common. Some regular vocalic changes evidently take place in Choctaw, but from Byington's material little can be gleaned that yields definite results on this point. Prominent changes, however, are the assimilation of vowels in some prefixes and initial stem vowels to the value of the longer, and the phonetic modification of *m* of the pronouns to *n* before certain consonants.

It also appears that syllables are well balanced with consonant and vowel, the words and stems themselves showing a strong tendency to end in a vowel. Nominal and verbal derivative suffixes are likewise mostly syllabic with a final vowel, while the presence of consonant syntactic endings, whose position is always final, tends to give consonant terminations to words in sentences. There do not seem to be any restrictions in the use of initial vowels or consonants.

The processes employed by the Maskogian languages to express grammatical change are prefixation, infixation, suffixation, and a form of reduplication. The latter, however, is not of as much importance in general usage as the affixing processes.

In a general review of the grammatical functions played by the various affixes, it appears that under the heading of prefixes we have two pronominal paradigms, including the possessive and neutral subjective, the objective, and indirect objective forms; in short, all but the active subject pronouns in the Creek dialects and the first person of this paradigm in the western and middle groups of dialects. Some verbal derivatives, such as locatives, reciprocal, reflexive, and instrumental are also prefixes. Under suffixes we find the active subject pronouns in Creek and Hitchiti, and only the first person of

AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST [N. S., 9, 1907]

this paradigm in the western languages, together with quite a number of modal and temporal, adverbial, plural and distributive, noun-forming, verb-forming, and two syntactic case suffixes. Besides these we encounter a richness of demonstrative article endings which offer one of the chief noun complexities of the languages of this group. This matter, which shows the most complexity in Choctaw and Chickasaw, has, among other problems of Maskogian, not yet been worked out satisfactorily.

Infixation, which is usually accompanied by phonetic changes such as sonantizing for instance, serves several purposes in these languages. We find it employed in Creek to express modification in mood and tense, and in Choctaw and Chickasaw to indicate voice, and such adverbial ideas as the continuative, immediative, intensive, and frequentative. Similar internal changes occur in the Hitchiti verb, but it is not at all certain in how far these changes can be called true infixation until more is known of the verb etymology. Some of the internal phonetic modifications which accompany the insertion of a syllable into a Choctaw stem are nasalization of the vowel in the first syllable, aspiration, accentuation, and lengthening. Besides, the consonant of the accented syllable in the middle of polysyllabic verbs is frequently doubled in conformity with some law which operates in cases of infixation. The whole question of infixes is an interesting one in Creek, and seems to be closely connected with that of verbal derivative prefixes.

Some of the evidence for this point is deserving of mention. It appears that many of the active bisyllabic verbs here have, in their first syllable, elements related phonetically to body parts. These may have been formerly instrumental or locative prefixes which, in combination with verb stems, have become in the course of development stereotyped words in which the prefix came to play no formal part as such. In that case the apparently infixed elements coming between this body-part prefix and the verb stem would be, in their original usage, nothing more than prefixes too. The occurrence of these so-called infixed elements in verbs which do not lend themselves to the above analysis may then be experimentally explained by assuming that the speakers lost, in some way, the consciousness of difference between bisyllabic verbs and monosyllabic

verbs with prefixes, and, later on, when the analogy became a fixed one, that both sorts of verbs were treated in the same way. This explanation suggests itself in Maskogian, in reference to the apparent infixation of certain elements in verbs of two syllables, somewhat more clearly than in Dakota where in certain similar verbs the subject pronouns are infixed. Some suggestive examples of these possibly derivative verbs taken from Creek, are *litkäs* I run, possibly connected with *ili* his foot, *náfkäs* I strike, *ina* his body, and more obviously still, *nukmiläs* I swallow, with *inúkwa* his neck.

Reduplication appears in Creek chiefly in bisyllabic adjectives and verbs derived from them to express ideas of distribution or frequency in time and space. The form of reduplication is rather peculiar and might possibly bear some relation to infixation. The first consonant and following vowel are repeated after the second consonant. A few examples may illustrate it better : *sálgi* many, *sálsagi* many distributed ; *hátki* white, *háthagi* white in spots ; *lástis* it is black, *láslatis* it is black in spots. An outwardly similar form, but apparently not subject to the same rule, is found in the western languages. Choctaw has reduplication in the verb, of the accented vowel with different consonants or semi-vowels, *y*, *h*, or *l*, added to it to form the passive voice and passive adverbial modification.

Position, it can readily be seen, does not play a very important part formally in Maskogian since a pronominally incorporating verb and syntactic noun suffixes give the various words in the sentence a fairly definite setting. There is, however, a general tendency to follow the order of subject, object, verb, and, in cases of compounding, modification or subordination, for the main idea or that which is to be qualified to come first in position.

Three distinct pronominal paradigms suffice to cover all the pronominal possibilities. They are not so clearly separated generically from each other as some of the paradigms in other American languages. The one may be called the active subject paradigm ; the second, the neutral subjective, neutral possessive, and direct objective ; and the third, the artificial possessive and indirect possessive objective. To be more clear, the first paradigm is used only in one circumstance, and that is to express the subject

of the active verb. These forms are suffixed with the one exception that in Choctaw and Chickasaw the second personal form is a prefix. The second class expresses, without distinction in form, by prefixing, the subject of the neutral verb, the possession of an object which is an inalienable possession such as a body-part or family relation, and its other function is to denote the pronominal object of an active verb. Thus there is no fundamental difference between such an expression as " I am sick " and " my sickness," so far as the pronouns are concerned. The last class of pronouns, which are also prefixes, is used to imply the possession of an object that can be acquired or transferred — although this category is not strictly logical — and, in a like sense, the indirect pronominal objects. These are commonly known as the dative and possessive indirect objects, the latter being rendered in English by *his*. In regard to the last two paradigms, as can be seen from the accompanying table, there seems to be a very close identity in form between them, the indirect objective appearing to amplify the possessive. These paradigmatic distinctions are common property to the whole stock, showing only slight variations in the different languages.

The true personal pronoun forms have only the first, second, and third singular, and the first person plural, except perhaps in the active subject paradigm. A distinction is marked in Choctaw between the dual and the plural first person. In the active subjective forms in all the languages there are second and third person plurals which, however, seem closely related to the singular forms. It would appear that these are derivatives from the singulars, as the plurals in the other paradigms undoubtedly are.

As has been mentioned before in speaking of processes, the pronouns in Creek appear in different forms to denote modifications in tense and mood. But in all such pronominal mood and tense complexes the pronoun stem elements are quite transparent. This is true in all the persons but the first singular, where some irregularity, possibly due to a phonetic change, tends often to obscure the radical part. The only widely differing forms are observable in the indicative and the negative, and this is a prominent feature of all the languages. The interrogative pronouns are apparently

derived from the indicative.   Modal auxiliaries are used for the other subordinate moods.

The tense signs are simple suffixes in Choctaw and Chickasaw. But in Creek these suffixes enter so closely into combination with the pronouns, coming between the latter and the verb stem, that the pronouns themselves often appear quite unrelated in different tenses.   Creek has also, it would seem, not only more complexity in tense and pronoun combinations but more tenses than the western languages.   It makes a distinction between continued and completed action in the future, past, and aorist.   The Creek verb requires, however, more critical study before it can be safely discussed as regards tenses.   Hitchiti exhibits similar verb complexities.

The classification of voice is found, for the neutral and active, in the pronouns in Maskogian.   The active is differentiated from the neutral by quite material differences in form and position.   The passive, however, is not denoted by any particular set of pronouns as the change takes place in the verb itself for this voice and the neutral pronouns are employed.

The subjoined table will show a few of the cognate pronominal forms chosen from the four available languages of the stock :

### ACTIVE INDICATIVE SUBJECT PRONOUNS

|  | CREEK (with verbal present -*is*) | HITCHITI (with verbal -*s*) | CHOCTAW | CHICKASAW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st pers. sing. | -*äs* | -*lis* | -*li* | -*li* |
| 2d pers. sing. | -*tckis* | -*tskis* | *ic*-, *is*- | *ic*- |
| 3d pers. sing. | (-*is*) | (-*s*) | —— | —— |

### ACTIVE NEGATIVE SUBJECT PRONOUNS
(with verbal -*s*)

|  | CREEK | HITCHITI | CHOCTAW | CHICKASAW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st pers. sing. | -*akas* | -*atas* | *ak*- | |
| 2d pers. sing. | -*tskigas* | -*tskatis* | *tcik*- | |
| 3d pers. sing. | -*gas* | -*tis* | *ik*- | |

### NEUTRAL SUBJECT, NATURAL POSSESSIVE, AND OBJECTIVE PRONOUNS

|  | CREEK | HITCHITI | CHOCTAW | CHICKASAW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st pers. sing. | *tca*- | *tca*- | *sa*- | *sa*-, *asa* |
| 2d pers. sing. | *tci*- | *tci*- | *tci*- | *tci*- |
| 3d pers. sing. | *i*- | *i*- | —— | *i*-, —— |
| 1st pers. plu. | *po*-, *pu*- | *po*-, *pu*- | *pi*- | *pu*-, *apo*- |

ACQUIRED POSSESSIVE, INDIRECT OBJECT, AND POSSESSIVE OBJECTIVE
PRONOUNS

|  | CREEK | HITCHITI | CHOCTAW | CHICKASAW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st pers. sing. | *am-* | *am-* | *am-* | *am-* |
| 2d pers. sing. | *tcim-* | *tci-* | *tcim-* | *tcim* |
| 3d pers. sing. | *im-* | *im-* | *im-* | *im-* |
| 1st pers. plu. | *pom-* | *puhni-, pu-* | *pim-* | *-pomi*[ᵋ] |

Prefatory to an attempt to say anything about nouns or verbs as such, it seems necessary to mention the lack of any real difference between many of the noun and verb stems themselves. A mere word (and the majority of them seem to be bisyllabic in Maskogian) without noun-forming or verb-forming suffixes, may rightly be called either a noun or a verb so far as its form alone indicates. This unmodified base is grammatically interpretable as an imperative verb or a mere abstract expression of the idea as a noun. There seems to be a parallelism in this respect with English monosyllables, such as sleep, run, kick. To become a true verb, in Creek and Hitchiti, the base is provided with a regular verbal ending; but in Choctaw and the western languages this formal appendage is not required. Likewise, to become a noun the base must take on nominal endings expressing syntactical relationship to other words or derivative noun-forming suffixes. In Creek and the eastern languages these nominal endings number at least half a dozen, while Choctaw and Chickasaw have a large number of demonstrative-article endings that come in combination with the syntactic endings, thus giving the noun quite an exact range of limitations and not a little cumbersomeness. Of these nominal syntactic endings there are two, one denoting the subject of a verb, the other the object, which are important characterizing features of the family.

Considering the verb complex with its pronominal and derivative prefixes, so-called infixes, and suffixes, Maskogian appears to be highly inflectional. The verbal affixes often modify the stem to some extent, but a yet more thoroughgoing change in the verb itself takes place under certain conditions. These conditions are the singularity, duality, and plurality of the subject, and singularity and plurality of the object of the verb. In some cases the changes wrought by these considerations of number are merely to the extent of additional suffixes to the verb stem. But there is a large cate-

gory of verbs whose stems are so widely different for singular and
plural subject or object as to be apparently non-related morpho-
logically.    The various languages show different development in
this connection.    The change which the Creek verb undergoes, for
instance, for a dual subject is affected by the attachment of a suffix
directly to the stem, to which suffix the pronominal elements are in
their turn added.    There is, as might be expected, an apparent
relationship between this dual verb suffix and the numerical *two*.
Some verbs in Creek are entirely different with singular, dual, and
plural subjects.    On the other hand, the effect of a plural object
upon the predicate is perhaps greater than in the foregoing case.
In a large number of instances when the object is plural an entirely
different verb from that used with a singular object is demanded.
Some concrete examples of these verb changes are : From Creek,
*isis* he takes a single object, *tcáwis* he takes more than one object ;
*litkis* he runs, *bifátkis* they run ; *ilidjis* he kills, singular object,
*pâ'cadis* he kills, plural object.

A similar radical difference is found between verbs with singular
and plural subjects in Chickasaw.   Choctaw shows the same thing,
according to Byington, regarding both subject and object.    It
seems more usual, however, in this language to find the distinction
in the number of subject and object disregarded in the expressed
form of the verb.

Verbification of adjectives is characteristic, merely the addition
of a personal pronoun and a certain verbal suffix sufficing in all
such cases.   It seems that Hitchiti shows a stronger tendency than
Creek to verbify bisyllabic nouns by this formal process.

In the matter of voice the changes are purely verbal in Creek
and Choctaw, and these may be considered fairly typical of the two
groups.    In the former the passive forms differ materially from the
active in having a special suffix and in taking the possessive or
neutral subject pronouns.   Choctaw appears to infix a syllable in
the verb to form the passive from the active.   But, as has been
mentioned, what is here termed infixation is not an assured cer-
tainty so long as there remains any doubt as to the analysis of the
bisyllabic verbs which exhibit it.

There are a large number of derivative modal and adverbial

ideas in many other languages which are denoted by affixes, but here find their expression only in independent auxiliary verbs or uninflected adverbs. In Creek, for instance, such ideas as the potential and the quotative are expressed by adverbs, while other derivatives are expressed by independent verb forms. Such take the pronominal inflection in different moods and tenses as though they were the qualified verb, and the latter is rendered as an objective noun. For example, " I try to run " would be " run (with objective suffix) I try," and similarly for the desiderative. As an example of the first sort, that of the uninflected adverbial auxiliary, we have " able I see," for " I am able to see."

On the whole there are only a few derivative ideas the sign elements of which are fixed directly to the verb and so may be said to be incorporated into it. These include reflexive, reciprocal, instrumental, and a few locative prefixes, and evidently only a causative suffix and another whose meaning still remains obscure but probably means " in company with." As a matter of exactness some of these prefixes, from the word-like nature they seem to possess of themselves, may just as well be termed proclitic particles, and in this sense are of course less intimately associated with the verb as incorporated elements than might be supposed otherwise :

|  | CREEK | | HITCHITI | CHOCTAW [2] | CHICKASAW |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reflexive | *ĭ -* | | *il-* | *ille-, ill-* | *ili-* |
| Reciprocal | *idĭ-,* | *di-* | *iti-* | *ittĭ-, itt-* | *itĭ-* |
| Causative | *-idj* | | *-idsh* [1] | *-chi* | |
| Instrumental | *is-,* | *s-* | *is-, si-* | *isht-* | |

There also seem to be many verbs in Creek which are compounded with body-part words. These words may have instrumental meanings ; in some cases quite obviously they have. But invariably the similarities between the prepositive verbal elements and the words denoting body parts are very clearly visible. Some examples of these are given in the discussion of infixation (p. 476).

Starting with the indefinite word stem again, we find that various nouns as well as verbs can be built up by means of suffixes. Under these are the agentive, the active, and the abstractive. As an exception to this fulness of form, however, it seems that in Choctaw

---

[1] Gatschet's orthography.

[2] Byington's orthography is used in the Choctaw forms.

the mere unmodified word itself without formal endings expresses these conditions of the noun. Quite a far-reaching characteristic feature of this linguistic stock is to be found in the noun suffixes expressing case relationship of the subject and object of the active verb and the subject of the neutral verb. A complexity in the noun occurs, in Choctaw and Chickasaw, as regards the vowel article demonstratives which come directly after the noun stem and upon which the case elements hang, as it were. With these suffixes go a number of others indicating renewed mention, the conditional, the conjunctive, and other ideas more or less uncertain as to meaning. Thus in the noun of a full Choctaw sentence we ordinarily find several ideas of relationship with the context expressed by formal elements. The noun complex " man-some-referred to before-sub-ject of verb " might be taken as a typical example from both Choctaw and Chickasaw. In Creek when the word stem ends in a consonant it takes an apparently inorganic vowel, between the stem and the case ending, which may have been related in some way to the Choctaw article vowels. In Hitchiti, however, there seems to be some function attached to this connecting vowel, but from Gatschet's material it cannot be definitely ascertained to what extent.

The syntactic case suffixes in Creek and Hitchiti are two in number, as said before, indicating the subjective and objective by the consonants -*t* and -*n* respectively. Choctaw expresses its sub-jective by -*t* and its objective by nasalization of the final vowel, and Chickasaw has only the subjective in -*t*. By this it seems that the full expression of the objective case by formal elements weakens in the western Maskogian languages, playing no phonetic part what-ever in Chickasaw, so far as has been determined, and being worn down to a mere phonetic suggestion of itself as nasalization in Choc-taw. The idea is a particularly strong one in Creek, in which all sorts of verbs in various persons and tenses are converted into nouns or adjectives by the case endings according to their syntactical requirements.

The possessive relation between nouns, which, incidentally, might also be expected to be expressed by a case suffix, is denoted by the third person possessive pronoun.

The idea of plurality in nouns is not a very prominent one in any of these languages. There are only two general suffixes for this,

and one prefix in Choctaw, which cover the notions of distribution and collectivity in reference to people and animate beings.

|  | CREEK | HITCHITI | CHOCTAW [1] | CHICKASAW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Collective plural | -*algi* | -*ati* (*okli,* tribe) | -*okla, atiha* | *okala* |
| Diminutive | -*udji* | -*udshi* [2] | -*ushi* | -*aci* |
| Augmentative | *łakko* | *tcobi* | *chito* | *isto* |

The common method of forming the diminutive and augmentative of nouns is by adding an enclytic syllable, but it is interesting to note that Byington credits Choctaw with another process for diminution, namely, that of consonant modification.  He says: " Sometimes it (the diminutive) is expressed by a kind of lisp; as for *ikchito,* not large, say *iksito.*"

Locative and adjectival modification of nouns is rendered by descriptive words following, in order, the qualified idea, and on such occasions these modifiers take the same syntactic endings.  Many temporal adverbs are also treated syntactically as nouns.  The demonstratives in all the Maskogian languages show three general relations in time and space, namely, nearness to the speaker, nearness to the second person or to an object or person a short way off, and a general rather indefinite greater distance.

Lastly, in regard to nouns, the languages of the Maskogian family show a tendency toward the use of descriptive noun compounds for the names of many important objects in the everyday life and environment.  Leaves, for instance, are 'tree hair,' Indian is 'man red,' east is ' sun rises,' ocean is 'water white,' ancestors are ' our trunks' (meaning trunks of trees), shoe, moccasin, is 'man his foot coverer,' and knife is 'with something cut.'  In a similar manner objects that have newly come within their knowledge have been given, by these Indians, in accordance with some old morphological concept, compound descriptive names, so we have in Choctaw for mule, ' horse ears long'; for sugar, 'salt sweet'; and in Creek for horse, ' deer big'; for mule, 'deer big brayer'; for rum, ' something strong.'

To conclude with a few remarks on some of the more prominent features of Maskogian which are of interest when compared internally and with those of neighboring linguistic stocks, we find, in

---

[1] Byington's orthography.

[2] Gatschet's orthography.

looking abroad, quite a contrast as regards verbal polysynthesis. The large number of subordinate local and adverbial ideas which are expressed by independent word auxiliaries in Maskogian are found in Algonquian, and Eskimo as well, to be embodied in the verb itself by means of affixes which number more than a hundred. In the matter of verb polysynthesis Maskogian seems to be more like Sioux, in which these affixes number fewer than a dozen.    The presence of two syntactic case suffixes is another distinguishing trait which has not been found in any of the neighboring stocks so far as they are known.    The peculiar development of the negative modal pronoun is also rather strange to eastern languages.

As regards the languages of this group in relation to each other, more detailed investigation is necessary before much can be said. We have, however, nearly enough material to see that, to some extent, Choctaw shows a tendency toward simplification when compared with the eastern languages.    Expressions of tense and mood are here simplified in form by having the elements, which in Creek are embraced in the verb complex, added to the verb as loose suffixed particles.    Furthermore verbal and nominal endings, which give completeness and unmistakable identity to words, do not appear as prominently in Choctaw as they do farther east.    It has also been seen that one syntactic case ending tends to weaken and disappear in the western group.    The use of different verbs with singular and plural subject or object is also less rigidly observed as we leave the Creek group.    This tendency toward relative simplicity of expression, which Choctaw presents when compared with Creek, may be historically comparable to the process of development which has operated in the Siouan family, in which we find Dakota lacking many of the apparently old complexities which Dhegiha has preserved.

Lexically the greatest divergence is found between the two geographical extremes, the Choctaw-Chickasaw group and the Creek or eastern.    Comparative vocabularies are not given here as they are fairly abundant in other published sources, a short but handy one being available in Gatschet.[1]

---

[1] Op. cit., vol. I, p. 56.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,
    PHILADELPHIA.